



STATE OF WISCONSIN \

DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS  
Wisconsin Emergency Management

2400 Wright St  
P.O. Box 7865  
Madison, WI 53707-7865  
Telephone (608) 242-3232  
Facsimile (608) 242-3247  
24-Hour Emergency Hotline:  
1-800-943-0003

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*For Further Information Contact: Lori Getter, Public Information Officer  
(608) 242-3239*

## **WISCONSIN'S WINTER AWARENESS WEEK NOVEMBER 8-12, 2004**

**(MADISON)** Governor Jim Doyle has declared November 8-12, 2004 as Wisconsin's Winter Awareness Week. The annual campaign sponsored by Wisconsin Emergency Management and the National Weather Service is to remind people to be prepared for winter conditions that could threaten their safety.

Winter storms are considered deceptive killers because most deaths are indirectly related to the storm such as traffic accidents on icy roads or people dying from prolonged exposure to the cold.

It is important to start taking preventive measures for winter weather. Now is the perfect time to winterize your car and home, gather items for a disaster kit, and make sure you have a NOAA weather radio or a commercial radio with fresh batteries.

Enclosed are additional winter weather tips. If you would like the information e-mailed, please contact Lori Getter at (608) 242-3239 or [lori.getter@dma.state.wi.us](mailto:lori.getter@dma.state.wi.us). Additional Wisconsin weather maps and brochures are available on the Wisconsin Emergency Management website at <http://emergencymanagement.wi.gov> or from the National Weather Service at [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov).

For more information on the winter weather awareness campaign, contact your county emergency management director or your local National Weather Service office.

###More ###

# Winter Driving in Wisconsin

## Winter Facts

- Typically there are over 19,800 vehicle accidents in Wisconsin during winter months when roads are covered with ice, snow or slush.
- On average in Wisconsin, 78 people are killed and 7,115 people are injured each winter season in accidents when roads are ice, snow or slush covered.



- Most crashes are caused by "driving too fast for current conditions." This is especially true during the first couple snowfalls or freezing rain events - people forget to slow down!
- Heavy Heavy rains and snowmelt in late winter or early spring can result in flooded roads. Nearly half of all flash flood deaths are associated with vehicles! Turn Around Don't Drown

For additional information -  
<http://www.srh.noaa.gov/srh/tadd/>

## Winter Driving

Plan your travels and check the latest weather reports to avoid the storm. You can find out the latest road conditions by going to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation website at <http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov> or by calling toll free at **1-800-ROADWIS (762-3947)**.

Drive with your headlights on - make it easier for others to see your vehicle!!!  
Allow for plenty of time to reach your destination!

It is also important to check and winterize your vehicles before the winter season begins. Keep your gas tank near full to avoid ice in the tank and fuel lines. Carry a winter storm survival kit in your vehicle that includes:

- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- First-aid kit
- Shovel, tools, booster cables and windshield scraper
- High-calorie non-perishable food
- Sand or cat litter to use for traction

*National Weather Service  
Wisconsin Department of Transportation*

# Keep Safe - Stay Informed

**The National Weather Service (NWS) issues storm warnings and watches. Here's what they mean and what you should do.**

**Winter Storm Watch**—Winter storm conditions (heavy snow, sleet and freezing rain) are possible within the next 36-48 hours. Continue monitoring the weather forecast.

**Winter Storm, Ice Storm, Heavy Snow or Heavy Sleet Warning** –A significant winter event is occurring or will begin in the next 24 hours. Take necessary precautions—consider canceling travel plans.

**Blizzard Warning**– Winds that are 35mph or greater, blowing snow with reduced visibility to 1/4 mile or less for a duration of at least 3 hours and dangerous wind chills are expected. Consider canceling travel plans.



## **Wisconsin Winter Weather Facts – *National Weather Service***

Depending on the prevailing jet stream pattern and other factors, Wisconsin residents can experience a wide range of winter extremes, ranging from killer dense fogs and flooding rains to widespread heavy snows and blizzards that can bring travel to a standstill! Be ready!

- The coldest temperature reported during the 2003-2004 winter season was -31 ° at Big Falls Hydro on February 16, 2004. Hurley reported a total of 191.1 inches of snow for state high honors. Beloit College had the state low honors of 15.2 inches.
- Wisconsin's all-time lowest reading is -55 ° near Couderay in Sawyer County. Readings -30 ° have been recorded in every month from November through April. On the other hand, maximum temperatures have reached into at least the 60s during each month of the winter season! In addition, Wisconsin has had a tornado in every month except February!
- The average annual snowfall across the state ranges from 35 to 40 inches across the counties along the Illinois border to 150 to 165 inches in Iron County snowbelt from Gurney to Upson to Hurley. However, in some winters very little snow falls – southern Wisconsin can have as little as 10 to 15 inches while the Iron County snowbelt may have only 100 inches.
- It is possible for some southern Wisconsin locations to pick up 75 to 140% of their average winter snowfall in only one month! In December 2000, Port Washington measured 55.5 inches, Milwaukee had 49.5 inches and Madison saw 35.0 inches. Average winter season values are 38.0 inches, 52.4 inches and 49.9 inches respectively.
- Speaking of ***official*** snowfall records, try these:
  - Greatest daily total – Neillsville, 26.0 inches of snow on Dec. 27, 1904
  - Greatest single storm total – Superior, 31.0 inches Oct. 31-Nov. 2, 1991
  - Greatest monthly total – Hurley, 103.5 inches Jan. 1997
  - Greatest seasonal total – Hurley, 301.8 inches in 1996-97 Winter
  - Deepest snow on ground (excluding drifts) – Hurley, 60.0 inches on Jan. 30, 1996

## Keep Warm and Safe

**Frostbite** is damage to body tissue caused by extreme cold. A wind chill of  $-20^{\circ}$  Fahrenheit (F) could cause frostbite in just 15 minutes or less. Frostbite causes a loss of feeling and a white or pale appearance in extremities such as fingers, toes, ear tips or the tip of the nose. If symptoms are detected—Seek medical care Immediately!

**Hypothermia** is a condition that develops when the body temperature drops below  $95^{\circ}$  F. It is very deadly. Warning signs include uncontrollable shivering, disorientation, slurred speech and drowsiness. Seek medical care Immediately!

**Overexertion** is dangerous. Cold weather puts an added strain on the heart. Unaccustomed exercise such as shoveling snow or pushing a car can bring on a heart attack or make an existing medical condition worse.

**Pets** also need extra care when the temperatures fall. They should be brought inside when the temperature reaches  $30^{\circ}$  with wind chill. Dogs and cats can get frost bitten ears, nose and feet if left outside during bitter cold weather. Chemicals used to melt snow and ice can also irritate pets' paws and be sure to keep anti-freeze, salt and other poisons away from pets as well.

## Be Prepared

Some of the dangers associated with winter storms include loss of heat, power and telephone service and a shortage of supplies. To help protect your family now is the time to put together a disaster supply kit. Here are some items to include:

- Flashlights and extra batteries
- Battery-powered All-Hazards NOAA Weather Radio and a commercial radio
- Non-perishable food that requires no cooking and bottled water
- First-aid supplies
- Fire extinguisher, smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector
- If appropriate, extra medications and baby items
- If you have an emergency heating source, such as a fireplace or space heater -- make sure you have proper ventilation
- Make sure pets have plenty of food, water and shelter

For additional information, contact your county emergency management office, the National Weather Service or Wisconsin Emergency Management at 608-242-3232. Winter safety tips can also be found at the following websites:

[www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov)

<http://emergencymanagement.wi.gov>

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